

HOUSE BILL 1644

By Lamberth

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39  
and Title 49, relative to safety precautions taken in  
response to potential active shooter situations.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

WHEREAS, the safety of Tennessee students, teachers, substitute teachers, and staff is paramount; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee schools are equipped with alarm systems and regularly conduct a variety of drills to direct the actions of students, teachers, substitute teachers, and staff on school premises in the event of a fire, inclement weather, and in active shooter situations; and

WHEREAS, it is essential that students, teachers, substitute teachers, and staff are notified of the correct emergency or threat occurring on school premises and take the correct safety measures; and

WHEREAS, smoke generated from ammunition fired within a school building could activate a fire alarm, causing students, teachers, substitute teachers, and staff to move or congregate into areas that are unsafe and that place them in grave danger in an active shooter situation; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee schools must anticipate and plan for the possibility of a fire alarm being activated automatically by the presence of gunfire or manually by an active shooter with criminal intent, and that students, teachers, substitute teachers, and staff may unknowingly respond to the wrong emergency or threat, placing them in grave danger; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-807, is amended by designating subsection (e) as subsection (f) and adding the following as a new subsection (e):

(e)

(1) Each LEA, public charter school, private school, and church-related school shall develop a policy to direct how students, teachers, substitute teachers, and staff are to respond when a fire alarm is activated on school premises outside of a scheduled fire drill to protect students, teachers, substitute teachers, and staff in the event the fire alarm was activated due to the presence of an active shooter on school premises.

(2) Each LEA and, to the extent applicable, each public charter school, shall coordinate with its district-wide school safety team and building-level school safety team to incorporate the policy developed pursuant to this subsection (e) in its district-wide school safety plan and building-level school safety plan.

(3) Each policy developed pursuant to this subsection (e) must be implemented no later than July 1, 2024, and must be annually reviewed and updated, if necessary, to ensure that the policy reflects best practices for the safety of students, teachers, substitute teachers, and staff.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.